



Grey County Federation of Agriculture

Request for Funding From County of Grey

**Prepared by:
Executive Committee of
Grey County Federation of Agriculture**

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Statement of Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure

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Thank you.

Executive Summary

The Grey County Federation of Agriculture (GCFA) represents 77% of the farm families in Grey County and has had a solid presence in this County for the past 71 years. The Board of Directors have worked diligently to support the needs and issues of farmers by feeding the grassroots issues onto the Ontario Federation of Agriculture who work to champion the interests of farmers at the provincial and federal government tables. There have been numerous successes over the years which is why this continues to be the largest farm organization in Ontario representing the majority of farm families.

Financial support for our organization is limited to transfer payments from OFA and we are requesting additional funds from the County of Grey, similar to support provided to all our surrounding County Federations. We have identified several new initiatives that we would like to pursue, as well as continuing with successful projects we have participated in for several years.

We are pleased to present this Request for Funding and our supporting documentation and hope that you will agree with the importance of supporting our farm families and the agricultural industry in Grey County through our organization.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture is the leading advocate for
Ontario's farmers
and is Ontario's voice of the farmer

Organization Background

Mission Statement

The Grey County Federation of Agriculture (GCFA) works toward economic growth and community stability for Grey County farmers.

Membership

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) is the largest general farm organization in Ontario, representing 37,000 farm families across the province. As a dynamic farmer-led organization based in Guelph, the OFA works to represent and champion the interests of Ontario farmers through government relations, farm policy recommendations, lobby efforts, community representation, media relations and more. OFA is the leading advocate for Ontario's farmers and is Ontario's voice of the farmer.

Each individual County in Ontario has their own Federation and Grey County has had a very active and progressive Federation for the past 71 years. In 2011 Grey County Federation of Agriculture represented 1414 Grey County farmers who belong to the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA). Statistics show that there are 1841 farmers in Grey County in 2006 during the last census (new results due in May 2012). Grey County Federation is representing approximately 77% of farmers in this County. The grassroots issues from Grey County go onto the OFA where there is even more power and effort made to assist the farmer.

Structure

The Grey County Federation of Agriculture is made up of representatives from each of the former 15 townships in Grey County. At one time, each township had their own individual Township Federation, however, over the past several years, these Federations have disbanded and now support the Grey County Federation. Two remaining Township Federations include: Collingwood Township Federation and Proton/Egremont Township Federation.

The GCFA has an elected Board of Directors who attend monthly meetings and an annual meeting in October. An Executive is elected annually consisting of President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President and two Executive members at-large. Two members represent GCFA at the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) policy advisory committee. One member is elected to represent Grey and Bruce Counties as an OFA Board Member.

GCFA Board members also sit on other agricultural organization as representatives of GCFA.

Please see a complete listing of Board Members and Representatives in Appendix A

Office Location and Staffing Support

For the past 50 years, GCFA has maintained a full time main street office in Hanover, jointly with Bruce County Federation of Agriculture and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. The County Federations share employment of a Secretary-Treasurer, Gail Fullerton. Ontario Federation of Agriculture employ a Member Service Representative, Joanne Hughes, who works out of this office as well. OFA members in Grey and Bruce Counties call the office for information and service and this is considered the busiest county office in Ontario.

OFA member service representative, Joanne Hughes, spends much of her time visiting farmers, answering questions, providing support and information as needed, and sharing information between OFA and GCFA Directors. She has the support of OFA researchers for in-depth information, and a network of other Member Service Representative in Ontario, as she assists farmers.

The office secretary-treasurer, Gail Fullerton, supports Grey County and Bruce County Federations in all events, activities and meetings.

Office upgrades are in progress to increase efficiencies in the office, and to keep up with changing technology. Webinars will be held at our harvest table for members, rather than travelling to the cities for meetings and information. Historical information has been transferred to Grey County archives and purging of outdated information has cleaned up the office. With the closure of OMAFRA field offices, our office has become a hub of information. The office will become more welcoming to our farm members to come for information and network with other farmers.

Our Initiatives, Successes and Services to Agriculture and Agri-business in Grey County

Education, Outreach and Advocacy:

- Public Speaking Competition: annually GCFA sponsors this competition in elementary schools across the County. Individual townships will sponsor individual school competitions, while the GCFA sponsors the semi-finals and final levels. Prizes are awarded to competitors totaling nearly \$1,000 plus refreshments. Finalists are invited to present their speeches at the annual Tommy Cooper awards evening.
- The Rural Voice is a popular farming magazine providing excellent local communication of events and agri-news. GCFA pays the subscription to this magazine for all Grey County OFA members to receive this monthly. Grey County regularly submits articles of local interest.
- Meetings are held with elected municipal, provincial and federal leaders to discuss current issues of concern related to the agricultural industry and farm families. Meetings were held with Larry Miller MP, Carol Mitchell MPP, Bill Murdoch MPP. in the past year.
- GCFA participates in organizing the annual Grey-Bruce Farmers Week held in January each year, and participates in the Chesley Kinsmen Agri-Fair held annually in April. Information booths provide information and are always an excellent opportunity to network with farmers and to hear their issues. A booth was also manned at the Canadian Plowing Championships held in Grey County in September.
- A curling bonspiel is hosted annually in February for farmers to enjoy a day away with other farmers.
- Food Freedom Day is the day on which the average family has earned enough disposable income to pay for the entire year's food bill. The farmer's share of the family food bill has already been earned by the average family by approximately February 8th. Grey County Federation create and distribute post cards to inform the public of this day and other surrounding County Federations also purchase cards from Grey County to distribute in their Counties also.
- In advance of provincial and federal elections in 2011, we organized All-Candidate meetings for the Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound riding to hear candidate policies on agriculture and to help farmers make informed decisions before voting. We organized these events with the support and cooperation of the Christian Farmers Federation of Grey Bruce, and the Grey Chapter of the National Farmers Union.
- Recently a new logo for GCFA was developed and approved. This will be used to promote the organization and to become more visible.

Grey County Initiatives in 2010 and 2011:

We listen to our farm families and the following issues were brought to our attention and we acted.....

- Lyme disease –Dr. Graham Kucan of Hanover gave a very good presentation at one of our Board meetings. This is an issue because Lyme disease is contracted from deer ticks in the bush and long pasture grasses belonging to farmers. This has not been a recognized disease by the medical community and often the problem is misdiagnosed leading to a long debilitating and painful disease. Pressure from the farming community is beginning to made the medical community more aware. A resolution was created and submitted by Grey and Bruce Counties, to OFA and approved for further action and research.
- Coyote bounty petition by Bill Murdoch, MPP was supported by GCFA to control an over-population of coyote.
- Wild Chervil – a resolution was sent to OFA to encourage faster development of a suppressant for this very invasive weed that has been found in Grey County.
- Hydro rates – concerns from members about rapidly increasing hydro bills and taxing from 5%GST to 13%HST was heard and a resolution submitted to OFA to lobby the government for affordable hydro rates for the farming community
- Gas and Diesel Taxation – a double tax of Federal Excise tax and Provincial Road tax, plus HST was a concern so Grey County put in a resolution to OFA to have the double tax removed from farm gas and diesel, and only have HST.
- Abattoir Issue – Small, local abattoirs are being unfairly regulated and Grey County has supported the Malcolm Women’s Institute, and OFA as they encourage the government to be reasonable. Over-regulation has caused many abattoirs to close in Grey County which then makes it difficult for consumers to purchase local meat and local farmers to market their product locally.
- Green Energy Initiatives: wind and solar power have been contentious issues.

Interesting Note: In 2003 Grey County Federation submitted a resolution to OFA asking them to lobby the government to encourage more Ontario food on hospital menus. The Grey County Federation then spoke to Leona Dombrosky, then Minister of Health, about supporting the produce of Ontario farmers in health care facilities. At the 2011 OFA convention, one the guest speakers was a chef from a Scarborough hospital who explained how most foods they prepared and serve are made from local Ontario grown foods.

Co-operation with Other Organizations:

- Provided financial support to the following organizations in need:
 - Grey County Farm Safety Association
 - Provided funding to 'The Real Dirt on Farming' magazine produced by the Ontario Farm Animal Council
 - Grey Dufferin Community Pasture
 - Grey County 4-Hdairy club
 - Grey-Bruce Agriculture and Culinary Association
 - Canadian Plowing Championships in 2011
 - Grown in Grey student learning event in April
- Grey County Directors participate and provide input to the following organizations:
 - Grey County Farm Safety Association
 - Forest Stewardship Network
 - Source Water Protection Program
 - Ag Advisory and Sustainability Plan
 - Grey County Ag Services
- GCFA is pleased to have the Grey County Warden or a designate, attend our monthly meetings. Over the past year, information shared with our group included: noxious weeds, lot severances, Dufferin quarry project, excessive coyote numbers, hydro lines and wind turbines.

Other Activities and Township Initiatives:

- GCFA recently reviewed and updated their constitution, by-laws, funding policy and expense guidelines to ensure up-to-date
- Individual townships participate in their local fall fairs and plowing matches with information booths.

Exciting Plans for 2012

1. Roadside billboards in support of local farmers to create awareness and appreciation of farmers in our communities, is underway with the Grey County and Bruce County sign departments.
2. Agricultural Farm Tour for Politicians to show them first hand some of the issues facing farm families. This is a new initiative for 2012 and very important since some of our new provincial and federal politicians do not have experience with the local agricultural industry.
3. Organizing of busses from different locations in the County to visit the Outdoor Farm Show in September.
4. Increase our involvement with youth education of agriculture by: participating in the Grown in Grey event for grade 4/5 students in April; sponsoring a young farmer to attend the Ontario Young Farmers Forum in Toronto in November; award an education scholarship to each high school in Grey County for one student pursuing post secondary education in agriculture or agri-business.
5. Host two Farm Implement Road Safety education evenings with the help of the O.P.P and Ministry of Transportation. In March, before farmers are back on the roads with their equipment, we would like to remind them and educate them on the MTO rules and general road safety.
6. Research and develop a plan to convert the individual township representation on the GCFA Board of Directors to municipal representation. The current Board of Directors is determined to ensure we have complete representation from across the County with a good cross-section of farm families.
7. Invite more commodity groups to join the GCFA Board table to have a more complete representation of agricultural groups. Groups to be invited include: Grey-Bruce Beekeepers Association, Georgian Bay Fruit Growers, Grain Farmers of Ontario, Grey County Dairy Producer Committee, Grey County Soil & Crop Improvement Association, Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency, Grey County Cattlemen's, Grey-Bruce Pork Producers.

Funding Support Requested

The Grey County Federation of Agriculture current funding relies totally on the Ontario Federation of Agriculture transfer payment of a small portion of the membership fee paid when farmers apply for their farm business registration. In the past this funding has limited GCFA to activities that they can pursue in support of farm families. We have identified needs within the farming community and would like to enhance our representation and support of the agricultural community.

We are requesting \$10.00 per Grey County farmer.

The surrounding Counties of Simcoe, Dufferin, Wellington, Huron and Bruce are fortunate to have additional financial support from their respective municipal governments, and we are hopeful that you will see the value in our contribution to the agricultural community in Grey and provide support equal to their support.

Conclusion

We are confident that our plans for 2012 will continue to support all farmers, beyond our 77% membership in Grey County, and with the financial assistance of the County of Grey, we can ensure farmers issues are heard and acted upon.

We would be pleased to meet with Grey County Council
to further discuss our request.

Grey and Bruce County Federations of Agriculture
446 – 10th Street
Hanover, ON N4N 1P9

519-364-3050
1-800-275-9551
e-mail: grey@ofa.on.ca

Appendix A

GREY COUNTY FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE 2011/2012

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PHONE: 519-364-3050

1-800-275-9551

FAX: 519-364-4119

EMAIL: grey@ofa.on.ca

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County Executive:		Address:		Phone:	Fax & Email:
Past Pres.	Anne Marie Watson (Jim)	313675 Hwy 6 N R#1, Durham	N0G 1R0	P: 369-6008 C: 369-8243	F: 369-5277 amreidwat@yahoo.com
President	Wayne Balon (Heather)	409155 Grey Road 4 R#1, Singhampton	N0C 1M0	P: 922-2366 C: 705-351-2366	F: 922-9985 balon@sympatico.ca
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2 nd V.P.	Emily Weppler (Dale)	R#2, Ayton	N0G 1C0	P: 665-2150	morning-dew-acres@hotmail.com

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OFA Zone 2 Director Grey-Bruce:		Address:		Phone:	Fax & Email:
Paul Wettlaufer (Maryann)		222378 Concession 14 RR#1, Neustadt	N0G 2M0	P: 665-7646 C: 369-7528	F: 665-7646 wrendale@wightman.ca

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Grey North	Allen Hughes (Janice)	125771 Sideroad 13 RR#2, Meaford	N4L 1W6	P: 538-2938	F: 538-2938 allenh47@hotmail.com
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Township Directors 2011/2012		Address:		Phone:	Fax & Email:
Artemesia	Bob Brassington (Sylvia)	795098 East Back Line RR#4, Markdale	N0C 1H0	P: 986-2162	F: 986-2162
Collingwood	Jacquie Hendry (Eric)	RR#2, Ravenna	N0H 2E0	P: 705-445-5418	F: 705-445-1950
Derby	W.M. Don Hill (Ruth)	RR#4, Owen Sound	N4K 5N3	P: 794-4778	F: 794-4640 hilldon@bmts.com
Egremont/ Proton	Karl Chittka (Ann)	106689 Southgate Rd 10 RR#5, Dundalk	N0C 1B0	P: 923-6974	F: 923-6623 kchittka@everus.ca
Euphrasia	Brad Matchett (Laura)	805092 Sideroad 25 RR#3, Markdale	N0C 1H0	P: 538-0455	F: 538-0014
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Normanby	Emily Weppler (Dale)	RR#2, Ayton	N0G 1C0	P: 665-2150	morning-dew- acres@hotmail.com
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Sydenham	Albert McLean (Dianne)	324079 Sideroad 27 RR#1, Annan	N0H 1B0	P: 376-0648	
Bentinck, Holland, Keppel-Sarawak, Sullivan - Vacant					

Invited Organization Representatives:		Address:		Phone & Fax:	Email:
Grey County Cattlemen	Bill (Wm. R.) Herron (Linda)	81352 Grey Road 5 RR#4, Tara	N0H 2N0	P: 934-2001	bherron@bmts.com
G-B Pork Prod.					
GC Dairy Producers	James Visser	595224 4 th Line RR#2 Ravenna	N0H 2E0	P: 705-444-7899	jamesandalice@ultrafastwir eless.com
Sheep Marketing Agency					
Georgian Bay Fruit Growers					
G-B Beekeepers Assoc.					
GC Soil & Crop Improvement					
County Council	Warden	County Admin. Building, 595 9 th Ave. E, Owen Sound	N4K 3E3	1-800-567-4739 ext. 1225	warden@grey.ca
OMAFRA	Kelly Ward- Grey, Bruce, Dufferin Co.	Box 189, 220 Trillium Court, Bldg. 3 Walkerton	N0G 2N0	P: 881-1289 C: 540-8608	F: 881-0525 Kelly.L.Ward@ontario.ca

Director Appointments To Represent GCFA:		Address:		Phone & Fax:	Email:
Grey Ag Services	Karl Chittka	106689 Southgate Rd 10 RR#5, Dundalk	N0C 1B0	P: 923-6974	F: 923-6623 kchittka@everus.ca
Grey County Farm Safety	Bob Brassington (Sylvia)	795098 East Back Line RR#4, Markdale	N0C 1H0	P: 986-2162	F: 986-2162
Grey-Bruce Farmers Week	Wayne Balon	409155 Grey Road 4 RR#1, Singhampton	N0C 1M0	P: 922-2366 C: 705-351-2366	F: 922-9985 balon@sympatico.ca
Forestry Stewardship	Karl Chittka	106689 Southgate Rd 10 RR#5, Dundalk	N0C 1B0	P: 923-6974	F: 923-6623 kchittka@everus.ca
Grey Dufferin Community Pasture	Karl Chittka	106689 Southgate Rd 10 RR#5, Dundalk	N0C 1B0	P: 923-6974	F: 923-6623 kchittka@everus.ca
Source Water Protection	Don Hill	RR#4, Owen Sound	N4K 5N3	P: 794-4778	F: 794-4640 hilldon@bmts.com

